afoot small schemes for remunerative enterprises like the establishment of markets, slaughter-houses, and cart-stands. The Trivandrum Municipal Council has further engaged the services of an overseer for the supervision of public works, watering of roads, etc., which were hitherto left entirely to the care of Government. These are healthy signs of self-reliance and it is the sincere hope of the Government that such activities will multiply and pervade the life of the larger Municipal Councils in future. The fact, however, needs reiteration that the areas comprising the several municipalities of the State vary widely in their urban characteristics and the application of the provisions of one and the same Regulation to all these bodies alike cannot make for success. The Village Panchayat Bill, referred to in my Address last year, has already been introduced into the Legislative Council, and it is now passing through the Select Committee stage. When that Bill becomes law, as the Government trust it will in the near future, several of the present smaller Municipal Councils may circumscribe their activities within the ambit of its provisions, while the major municipalities and the few minor ones which have begun to reveal potentialities of urban development could avail themselves, with better readiness than before, of the improved opportunities which would be afforded by the Municipal Regulation when it is suitably amended. With the establishment of village panchayats in rural areas and with the retention of municipalities in places where alone there is real need for them, the Government trust that better days are in store for local self-government in the State.

62. The water-supply scheme for Trivandrum prepared by the late Mr. Banerji having been found to be too costly, a cheaper scheme for a combined water and electric supply to the town from the same source has been ordered to be prepared and it is now in progress. The filling up and raising the level of the Puttarikkantam swamp in the centre of Trivandrum town has also been commenced and the Public Works Department is proceeding with the work. It is also proposed to carry on a preliminary investigation for a water-supply scheme for the town of Nagercoil, one-half of the cost of the investigation being met by the Municipality and the other half by the Government.

63. Panchayat and Bench Courts. The Government are glad to note that their association of the people with the responsible work of administering civil and criminal justice is gaining increasing public confidence. The civil suits disposed of by the Panchayat Courts rose from 4,541 to 7,678 or by 69 per cent. during the last three years. The four First and four Second Class Magistrates' Benches established with effect from the 1st Dhanu, 1098 disposed of 5,871 cases during the first eight months of their tenure, giving an average of 734 cases per court. Since the close of 1098, two more Second Class Magistrates' Benches have been instituted, one at Parur and the other at Padmanabhapuram, from the 1st Chingam and the 1st Kanni, 1099, respectively.

64. Legislative Council. The Legislative Council, constituted under Regulation II of 1097, has now been at work for over a year and a half. The non-official members of the Council have not been slow to make a full and free use of the large powers vested in them under the new constitution ; and it is due to them to acknowledge that such use has on the whole been steadied by a sense of responsibility. Three meetings of the Council were held in 1098, lasting over a period of 26 days ; and besides transacting the usual legislative work, 548 interpellations were answered and 16 resolutions on matters of general public interest discussed at these meetings. Two meetings, extending over a period of 9 days, have been held in 1099 and it is proposed to hold two more meetings during the year. 251 interpellations were answered at the two meetings held in 1099 and 15 resolutions discussed. Prominent among the resolutions discussed in the Council so far are those relating to the establishment of a University in Travancore, the prohibition of the manufacture and importation of liquor except for medicinal purposes, the Kallar hydro-electric scheme, the restriction of public service to Travancoreans, the encouragement of vernaculars, the reduction of expenditure on salaries and allowances, the increase of outlay on minor irrigation works, the free cultivation of royal trees, the appointment of a retrenchment committee, the separation of the judiciary from the executive, the

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revision of the constitution of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the introduction of permanent settlement, and the appointment of a committee to examine the working of the development departments. Four resolutions were carried by the Council, *viz.*, those relating to the reduction of training for undergraduate teachers from two years to one year, the revision of the rules issued under the Arms Regulation, V of 1084, the teaching of spinning as a form of manual training in vernacular schools, and the postponement of the operation of the Civil Courts' Guide recently framed by the High Court with a view to reduce delays in the disposal of suits and introduced at the beginning of the current year. Of these, the Government have already accepted the first and the third resolutions, while they have not yet been able to issue final orders as regards the other two. In respect of several matters covered by the other resolutions also, the Government have, as you would have already noticed, taken action in pursuance of popular wishes. The Standing Finance Committee is consulted in respect of all new schemes and proposals involving fresh expenditure. Besides the six committees referred to in my Address last year, two more committees, composed of official and non-official members including some members of the Council, have, as mentioned already, been constituted to examine the working of the P. W. D. Workshops and the excise policy of the State. The reports of all these bodies, except the Popular Assembly Rules Committee which resigned without submitting its report, and the University Committee and the Excise Committee which have not yet closed their labours, have been received by the Government and orders are being issued on them one after another. I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to convey the acknowledgments of the Government to these committees for the valuable help rendered by them.

65. Among the important Bills now before the Legislative Council, two, *viz.*, the High Court Bill and the Reformatory Schools Bill, are ready for final reading. The former aims *inter alia* at enabling the High Court to inspect subordinate courts without the previous permission of the Government, and it is expected that the new Regulation will help the High Court in securing a better and prompter outturn of work all round. The Reformatory Schools Bill has been framed with a view to further ameliorate the condition of juvenile offenders. The Travancore Majority Bill and the Ezhava Bill will also be soon ripe for final reading. The Majority Bill is intended to fix the age of majority for all purposes at the completion of 18 years. The Ezhava Bill, which is an important piece of social legislation, purports to define and amend the law relating to marriage, succession, partition and family management among Ezhavas. As the necessary provision has been made to safeguard the interests of the Ezhava *tarwads* desiring to be exempted from the operation of the new measure, I think that this Bill, as passed by the Council, ought to meet the legitimate wishes of all sections of the community. Two other social Bills, *viz.*, one to revise the Nair Regulation, I of 1088, and the other to define and amend the law relating to the marriage, succession, partition and family management among Nanjanad Marumakkathaya Vellalas, are now in the hands of Select Committees. Select Committees are also considering, besides the Village Panchayat Bill to which reference has already been made, Bills to re-enact the Civil Procedure Code and to revise the law relating to limitation.

66. Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. As already mentioned, the committee appointed to consider the draft revised rules relating to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly was unwilling to submit a report within the terms of the reference made to it, and all its members except the President resigned in consequence. The more comprehensive question of the revision of the constitution of the Assembly came up subsequently in November last as a resolution for discussion in the Legislative Council. These discussions and other representations will be carefully considered before final orders are passed. Suffice it to state here that the Government fully realise the great advantages which both they and the public derive from the opportunity which the Assembly affords, once a year, for a direct meeting and a free exchange of ideas between a wider circle of the people's representatives and the head of the administration.

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